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INSIDE



Double Whammy

Fire gutted a retail store and a tire shop in San Antonio at the height of Typhoon Chaba Monday dawn.

Page 2



Love and War

A Washington state soldier has married the Iraqi woman he met and fell in love with while in Baghdad.

Page 13



Stolen!

Armed, masked thieves burst into a lightly guarded Oslo museum Sunday and snatched the Edvard Munch masterpiece "The Scream" and a second Munch painting from the walls as stunned visitors watched in shock.

Page 20



WHAT NOW?

With the roof of his house in tatters, this man seems to be pondering what to do next or where to turn to for help. The state of the house, located on Capitol Hill near the Legislature, prompted Sen. Pete P. Reyes, who was passing by, to stop and ask if anybody has been hurt. The man said none.

JAYVEE VALLEJERA

NMI in state of emergency

Initial estimate of damage at \$18 million

By JOHN RAVELO and LIBERTY DONES
REPORTERS

Supertyphoon Chaba ripped through the Northern Marianas yesterday with up to 180mph winds, plucking up trees and power poles that resulted in total power and water outages, flooding roads and homes, blowing away entire sections of roofs, and driving close to 900 persons to temporary shelters.

Gov. Juan N. Babauta quickly declared a state of emergency in the Commonwealth even before Chaba left the islands and asked President Bush to expeditiously declare the CNMI as a

Bush asked for expedited disaster declaration

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

Gov. Juan N. Babauta yesterday asked President Bush to expeditiously declare the Commonwealth as a major disaster area, stressing the urgent need for federal assistance to effectively respond to the destruction caused by Supertyphoon Chaba.

major disaster area, saying the destruction caused by the supertyphoon was so severe that local resources would not

Citing drained local resources, Babauta said the extent of damage caused by Chaba was so severe that it is beyond the CNMI's response capability. Initial estimates placed the damage at over \$18 million.

Babauta said the cost of damage to Saipan could reach over \$10 million; Rota, \$5 million; and Tinian, \$3 million. "It is obvious [that] Typhoon Chaba

has caused significant damage to our island's infrastructure, power, water, and wastewater systems, and that this damage is beyond the capability to respond without federal assistance," Babauta said.

"All of the emergency measures taken to ensure public safety have exhausted our government's resources in

See BUSH on Page 12

be enough to support recovery efforts.

The governor also asked the Federal Emergency Management Agency for

a Joint Federal/State Rapid Needs Assessment on the damage caused by the

See NMI on Page 12

One-two punch for CUC

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

Barely recovered from the onslaught of Typhoon Tingting in late June, the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. is again facing various maintenance and repair problems—from tree branches on power lines to down power poles.

Based on CUC's preliminary status report, 15 power lines were down and

two transformers had blown out as of 9am Monday.

At 4pm yesterday, most parts of Saipan had yet to have their electricity supply restored, said Pamela Mathis, CUC special adviser for corporate communications.

All CUC customers relying on power from Kiyas 1 to 4 lacked electrical power. The affected villages include Chalan Kiya, Kannat Tabla, Dandan, Fina Sis, and

See ONE-TWO on Page 12

Airlines resume flight service

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

Flight service at the Saipan International Airport went back to normal as winds and rains brought by Supertyphoon Chaba subsided yesterday.

Commonwealth Ports Authority executive director Carlos Salas said airlines resumed flight operations at 11am

Monday, with Japan Airlines making the first flight out of Saipan.

A JAL staff member said almost 500 JAL passengers have been stranded due to the cancellation of flights during the typhoon. These passengers were able to fly back to Japan aboard two consecutive JAL flights that departed at about 4:10pm and 5:15pm yesterday.

See AIRLINES on Page 12

Local

Island Snapshots

The Saipan Tribune accepts contributed pictures of birthdays, weddings, baptisms, and other community and family events for free publication. Material submitted should be original and not copyrighted, in digital or print format. Must include a caption containing complete details (a description of the event, identities of the persons in the picture, the date, and the place), the name of the contributor, and a contact number. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to edit the caption, the date of publication and the size of the picture. Contributors can e-mail their submissions to editor.tribune@gtepacific.net. To check if contributions are received, call 235-6397, 235-2440, or 235-8747.

crees

HEROES

COMMUNITY Briefs

Farmers' meeting on Aug. 25

All farmers are invited to a meeting next week to discuss the commitment to supply the PSS school meal program with locally grown fruits and vegetables.

The meeting will be held tomorrow, Aug. 25, 9am, at the Northern Marianas College-CREES Bldg. F. This is the 2nd meeting with farmers on Saipan.

Other topics for discussion include the survey result of production capacity of local farmers; regulation on purchase of local produce vs imported produce; and contract for supply of fruits and vegetables to school meal program.

For more information, contact NMC-CREES at 234-5498 Ext.1709 or 1713.

Workshop on slugs and snails control today

All farmers and ranchers on Saipan are invited to attend a workshop that would identify and present the findings, including the biology and methods to control slug and snails on CNMI.

The workshop will be held today, 1:30-3:30pm, at Room D-1 of the Northern Marianas College-Saipan campus.

Workshop presenters are Dr. Robert Hollingsworth, a biologist from the U.S. Department of Agriculture; and Dr. David Robinson, a malacologist from the USDA/APHIS.

For more information, contact NMC-CREES at 234-5498 Ext. #1709 or Isidro Cabrera at 287-0571.

DES Open House on Thursday

This is to inform all parents and guardians of Dandan Elementary School that we will be having our Open House on Thursday, Aug. 26, from 5:30pm to 6:30pm, followed by our first PTA meeting for school year 2004-2005 at 6:30pm in the school cafeteria. Your presence at our PTA meeting is very much appreciated.

Youth Learning Center registration to start

The Garapan Youth Learning Center announces its open-house/registration beginning Aug. 30, 2004 to Sept. 3, from 9am to 4:30pm. Interested parents are encouraged to visit the center. The center provides services on tutoring in general subjects, computer lab, sports, guidance and counseling and other related educational activities. Services are free of charge and available to youth from grade levels 1st through 12th. For more information contact 664-7883.

Checkpoints up today

The Department of Public Safety's Traffic Section and Bureau of Motor Vehicle will be conducting several vehicle insurance road-blocks and checkpoints today.

The first set up will be conducted on Beach Road, Susupe, in front of the Multi-Purpose Center. It will be in operation at approximately 9am and will be terminated at about 10:15am.

The second set up will be on Beach Road, Susupe, in front of Minatchom Atdao. Operation will start at about 4pm and will be terminated at about 5:15pm.

The road block/checkpoint will be terminated should it rain.

For more information, contact Traffic Public Information Specialist Rosa T. Ada-Hocog, Sgt. Sylvan M. Rangamar or Sgt. Joseph A. Flores at 664-9084/5.

EMO website now online

This is to inform the general public that the Emergency Management Office website is back in service as of Aug. 17, at 9:30am.

If you have any questions or concerns, call 322-8001/2/3.

E-form for SHEFA scholarship now available

Applications for Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance are now available online and can be downloaded by accessing its website: www.saipanshefa.com.

This option is especially helpful for those students who are currently abroad, and qualified to avail of this assistance.

The scholarship, which is under the Municipality of Saipan, Office of the Mayor, aims to provide supplementary financial assistance pursuant to Saipan Local Law 13-21, to qualified residents of Saipan (inclusive of the Northern Islands) in pursuing postsecondary education on Saipan or abroad.

Under the rules, ongoing applicants need to submit official sealed transcript, valid Saipan municipal ID No., and official class registration. New applicants are asked to submit acceptance letter into a higher education institution, proof of one year residency on Saipan, most recent official sealed transcript, and valid Saipan ID. No.

Completed application and supporting documents must be submitted to SHEFA at the Mayor's Office.

For inquiries call 234-6208/234-6280 or email: jbtmayor@vzpacifica.net.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF AUGUST 1, 2004									
DEPARTURES					ARRIVALS				
Destination	Carrier	Flight	Time	Day	Origin	Carrier	Flight	Time	Day
Guam	SA	600	06:00	Mo	Guam	SA	601	06:00	Mo
Guam	SA	602	06:00	Tu	Guam	SA	603	06:00	Tu
Guam	SA	603	06:00	We	Guam	SA	604	06:00	We
Guam	SA	604	06:00	Th	Guam	SA	605	06:00	Th
Guam	SA	605	06:00	Fr	Guam	SA	606	06:00	Fr
Guam	SA	606	06:00	Sa	Guam	SA	607	06:00	Sa
Guam	SA	607	06:00	Su	Guam	SA	608	06:00	Su
Guam	SA	608	06:00	Mo	Guam	SA	609	06:00	Mo
Guam	SA	609	06:00	Tu	Guam	SA	610	06:00	Tu
Guam	SA	610	06:00	We	Guam	SA	611	06:00	We
Guam	SA	611	06:00	Th	Guam	SA	612	06:00	Th
Guam	SA	612	06:00	Fr	Guam	SA	613	06:00	Fr
Guam	SA	613	06:00	Sa	Guam	SA	614	06:00	Sa
Guam	SA	614	06:00	Su	Guam	SA	615	06:00	Su
Guam	SA	615	06:00	Mo	Guam	SA	616	06:00	Mo
Guam	SA	616	06:00	Tu	Guam	SA	617	06:00	Tu
Guam	SA	617	06:00	We	Guam	SA	618	06:00	We
Guam	SA	618	06:00	Th	Guam	SA	619	06:00	Th
Guam	SA	619	06:00	Fr	Guam	SA	620	06:00	Fr
Guam	SA	620	06:00	Sa	Guam	SA	621	06:00	Sa
Guam	SA	621	06:00	Su	Guam	SA	622	06:00	Su
Guam	SA	622	06:00	Mo	Guam	SA	623	06:00	Mo
Guam	SA	623	06:00	Tu	Guam	SA	624	06:00	Tu
Guam	SA	624	06:00	We	Guam	SA	625	06:00	We
Guam	SA	625	06:00	Th	Guam	SA	626	06:00	Th
Guam	SA	626	06:00	Fr	Guam	SA	627	06:00	Fr
Guam	SA	627	06:00	Sa	Guam	SA	628	06:00	Sa
Guam	SA	628	06:00	Su	Guam	SA	629	06:00	Su
Guam	SA	629	06:00	Mo	Guam	SA	630	06:00	Mo
Guam	SA	630	06:00	Tu	Guam	SA	631	06:00	Tu
Guam	SA	631	06:00	We	Guam	SA	632	06:00	We
Guam	SA	632	06:00	Th	Guam	SA	633	06:00	Th
Guam	SA	633	06:00	Fr	Guam	SA	634	06:00	Fr
Guam	SA	634	06:00	Sa	Guam	SA	635	06:00	Sa
Guam	SA	635	06:00	Su	Guam	SA	636	06:00	Su
Guam	SA	636	06:00	Mo	Guam	SA	637	06:00	Mo
Guam	SA	637	06:00	Tu	Guam	SA	638	06:00	Tu
Guam	SA	638	06:00	We	Guam	SA	639	06:00	We
Guam	SA	639	06:00	Th	Guam	SA	640	06:00	Th
Guam	SA	640	06:00	Fr	Guam	SA	641	06:00	Fr
Guam	SA	641	06:00	Sa	Guam	SA	642	06:00	Sa
Guam	SA	642	06:00	Su	Guam	SA	643	06:00	Su
Guam	SA	643	06:00	Mo	Guam	SA	644	06:00	Mo
Guam	SA	644	06:00	Tu	Guam	SA	645	06:00	Tu
Guam	SA	645	06:00	We	Guam	SA	646	06:00	We
Guam	SA	646	06:00	Th	Guam	SA	647	06:00	Th
Guam	SA	647	06:00	Fr	Guam	SA	648	06:00	Fr
Guam	SA	648	06:00	Sa	Guam	SA	649	06:00	Sa
Guam	SA	649	06:00	Su	Guam	SA	650	06:00	Su
Guam	SA	650	06:00	Mo	Guam	SA	651	06:00	Mo
Guam	SA	651	06:00	Tu	Guam	SA	652	06:00	Tu
Guam	SA	652	06:00	We	Guam	SA	653	06:00	We
Guam	SA	653	06:00	Th	Guam	SA	654	06:00	Th
Guam	SA	654	06:00	Fr	Guam	SA	655	06:00	Fr
Guam	SA	655	06:00	Sa	Guam	SA	656	06:00	Sa
Guam	SA	656	06:00	Su	Guam	SA	657	06:00	Su
Guam	SA	657	06:00	Mo	Guam	SA	658	06:00	Mo
Guam	SA	658	06:00	Tu	Guam	SA	659	06:00	Tu
Guam	SA	659	06:00	We	Guam	SA	660	06:00	We
Guam	SA	660	06:00	Th	Guam	SA	661	06:00	Th
Guam	SA	661	06:00	Fr	Guam	SA	662	06:00	Fr
Guam	SA	662	06:00	Sa	Guam	SA	663	06:00	Sa
Guam	SA	663	06:00	Su	Guam	SA	664	06:00	Su
Guam	SA	664	06:00	Mo	Guam	SA	665	06:00	Mo
Guam	SA	665	06:00	Tu	Guam	SA	666	06:00	Tu
Guam	SA	666	06:00	We	Guam	SA	667	06:00	We
Guam	SA	667	06:00	Th	Guam	SA	668	06:00	Th
Guam	SA	668	06:00	Fr	Guam	SA	669	06:00	Fr
Guam	SA	669	06:00	Sa	Guam	SA	670	06:00	Sa
Guam	SA	670	06:00	Su	Guam	SA	671	06:00	Su
Guam	SA	671	06:00	Mo	Guam	SA	672	06:00	Mo
Guam	SA	672	06:00	Tu	Guam	SA	673	06:00	Tu
Guam	SA	673	06:00	We	Guam	SA	674	06:00	We
Guam	SA	674	06:00	Th	Guam	SA	675	06:00	Th
Guam	SA	675	06:00	Fr	Guam	SA	676	06:00	Fr
Guam	SA	676	06:00	Sa	Guam	SA	677	06:00	Sa
Guam	SA	677	06:00	Su	Guam	SA	678	06:00	Su
Guam	SA	678	06:00	Mo	Guam	SA	679	06:00	Mo
Guam	SA	679	06:00	Tu	Guam	SA	680	06:00	Tu
Guam	SA	680	06:00	We	Guam	SA	681	06:00	We
Guam	SA	681	06:00	Th	Guam	SA	682	06:00	Th
Guam	SA	682	06:00	Fr	Guam	SA	683	06:00	Fr
Guam	SA	683	06:00	Sa	Guam	SA	684	06:00	Sa
Guam	SA	684	06:00	Su	Guam	SA	685	06:00	Su
Guam	SA	685	06:00	Mo	Guam	SA	686	06:00	Mo
Guam	SA	686	06:00	Tu	Guam	SA	687	06:00	Tu
Guam	SA	687	06:00	We	Guam	SA	688	06:00	We
Guam	SA	688	06:00	Th	Guam	SA	689	06:00	Th
Guam	SA	689	06:00	Fr	Guam	SA	690	06:00	Fr
Guam	SA	690	06:00	Sa	Guam	SA	691	06:00	Sa
Guam	SA	691	06:00	Su	Guam	SA	692	06:00	Su
Guam	SA	692	06:00	Mo	Guam	SA	693	06:00	Mo
Guam	SA	693	06:00	Tu	Guam	SA	694	06:00	Tu
Guam	SA	694	06:00	We	Guam	SA	695	06:00	We
Guam	SA	695	06:00	Th	Guam	SA	696	06:00	Th
Guam	SA	696	06:00	Fr	Guam	SA	697	06:00	Fr
Guam	SA	697	06:00	Sa	Guam	SA	698	06:00	Sa
Guam	SA	698	06:00	Su	Guam	SA	699	06:00	Su
Guam	SA	699	06:00	Mo	Guam	SA	700	06:00	Mo

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE				
City	Carrier	Flight	Time	Day
Guam-Honolulu				
FRT 100	FA	2:00am	8:00am	Sat
Honolulu-Guam				
FRT 100	FA	6:00am	8:00am	Sat
Guam-Honolulu				
FRT 100	FA	8:00am	10:00am	Sat
Honolulu-Guam				
FRT 100	FA	8:45am	11:45am	Sat
Guam-Honolulu				
FRT 100	FA	4:00pm	4:00pm	Sat
Honolulu-Guam				
FRT 100	FA	4:00pm	8:00pm	Sat
Guam-Honolulu				
FRT 400	FA	6:00pm	8:00pm	Sat
Honolulu-Guam				
FRT 400	FA	6:00pm	7:00pm	Sat
Guam-Honolulu				
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CPA eyes November implementation of terminal charge

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Ports Authority may start implementing the \$4.50 passenger facility charge a month later than its October target.

CPA executive director Carlos Salas said the Federal Aviation Administration has already accepted the ports authority's application to start imposing the additional charge. But while CPA has been getting indications that an approval is forthcoming, FAA has yet to grant its formal consent.

According to Salas, the earliest time that CPA could start collecting the PFC is November. This is based on the assumption that FAA would give its approval by the end of this month. FAA regulations require airport authorities to provide airlines at least 60 days notice before implementing the charge.

Under CPA's proposal, departing passengers from the CNMI would pay a \$4.50 passenger facility charge. Airlines companies would collect the fee through sold airline tickets. The fee is similar to the departure or terminal fees collected

by other airports abroad.

Salas reiterated that PFC collection would provide the 10 percent matching fund required of CPA for its airport improvement projects under the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Federal Aviation Administration.

"We can get our 10 percent matching funds for our AIPs from the PFCs and it would also help us meet our debt service obligation, in which we are experiencing shortfall in the last two years," said Salas.

The implementation of the PFCs is part of the rate study conducted by Ricondo & Associates in an effort to help CPA meet its debt obligations. In the last two years, CPA was placed on credit watch by the Fitch and IBCA rating agency for its failure to meet its obligations.

Also, the new fee is intended to mitigate the possibility of another year of shortfall on the airport side and to finance the 1.25 bond ratio being implanted by the Franklin Fund.

The rest of the money generated would be used to fund CPA's 10 percent share of all grants that it would be getting in the next 10 years.

'Let's regain control of prison facility'

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

Regaining control of the CNMI prison system is the driving force behind the government's creation of a new Department of Corrections, the administration said.

In signing the bill creating the new department Friday, Gov. Juan N. Babauta said the CNMI "lost significant authority" to the U.S. Department of Justice under the provisions of a 1999 Consent Decree, which, among others, required the Commonwealth to develop a

plan to address operating the detention and prison facilities as a system, to correct deficiencies, and to address future population growth.

The order, issued by U.S. District Court judge Alex Munson, also required the CNMI to report to the DOJ on its implementation of those reforms in the prison system.

"The CNMI lost significant authority to the U.S. DOJ under provisions of the 1999 consent decree. Additionally, we faced criticism for not implementing the required changes and reporting to the

U.S. DOJ," said Babauta.

But he said that the government has addressed federal concerns, resulting in the ongoing construction of a new adult prison in Susupe.

He said issues concerning the Immigration Detention, Rota Detention, and Tinian Detention have also been looked at.

Further, he said that government has also completed and opened a new juvenile detention facility in Kagman.

"My goal is to continue our progress and regain control of all our prison/detention facilities from oversight by the U.S.

government," said Babauta.

The new law, as introduced by former Public Safety deputy commissioner Rep. Clyde Norita through House Bill 14-152, provides that all responsibilities for correctional and detention functions from the Department of Public Safety's Division of Corrections and the Immigration's Office of Detention shall be transferred to the new department.

The law says that a Corrections Department is necessary to promote a more efficient administration within the prison and detention system.

'OPA performing fairly well'

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

The Office of the Public Auditor is performing fairly well in subscribing to federal audit regulations, said Public Auditor Michael Sablan.

"But there's still room for improvement. We're going to be more proactive," he said recently.

It is toward this end that OPA has opened a three-day accounting and finance training for government employees last week, he said.

Sablan said the training was initially intended for OPA staff only but his office decided to expand it to include other personnel from other government agencies.

"OPA takes the initiative to provide government workers with basic accounting and financing skills," said Sablan.

The OPA-led training was participated by 45 government employees out of 90 people who had requested to be included in the program.

Sablan said the training, which was funded through a \$5,000-federal grant, came following suggestions from OPA personnel as well as by the federal government.

Sablan said that during an insular public auditors conference in Hawaii in 2002, the Department of the Interior had warned that it would no longer accept insular governments not responding to auditors' findings.

"We're told that federal grants may be reduced if financial performance is not controlled," said Sablan.

He said that this has been a problem in the CNMI for many, many years. "This area has been neglected."

But he indicated that in recent years, the CNMI has surfaced as one of the leading insular areas in terms of audit performance.

The OPA was accorded the highest possible rating in an external quality peer review a couple of years ago for "exemplifying the highest standards of the auditing profession."

The external quality control review was done by a team of auditors from the Association of Pacific Islands Public Auditors, composed of U.S. Department of Agriculture technical consultant Charles W. Hester; Guam Public Auditor Doris Brooks; and Guam Office of the Public Auditor audit manager Randall Wiegand.

The team said that OPA received a full compliance report—the highest of three possible ratings issued in an external quality control review.

The OPA is required by the CNMI Auditing Act and auditing standards of the U.S. Comptroller General to undergo such a review every three years.

Sablan said OPA is looking to the U.S. Inspector General's Offices, the General Accounting Office, and state auditor counterparts as models in refocusing OPA's approach to audits.

The OPA had launched its Professional Development Program to strengthen the office's performance and "keep pace" with changes in auditing standards.

SHELL

Island Snapshots

The ceiling of the biggest Mobil gas station Saipan, which is located on Middle Road in Garapan, collapsed.

JOHN RAVELO



Typhoon Chaba blew down this flame tree in Kilili Beach, taking with it a large portion of the grass that surrounded it.

CASSIE DLG FEJERAN



The wrath of the supertyphoon leaves this man homeless.

JOHN RAVELO

Nine-year-old Ronnie San Nicolas tries a balancing act on top of a sunken boat at Susupe Lake, which overflowed due to the heavy rains.

AGNES E. DONATO



CUC personnel take considerable time Monday morning to prevent electrical poles on Beach Road, Garapan from falling.

LIBERTY DONES



JAYVEE VALLEJERA

The strong wind of Supertyphoon Chaba failed to uproot this venerable old tree by the Northern Marianas College campus in Finasisu but it still managed to push the tree off center—and into the side of this car parked beside it.



SHAN SEMAN

Motorists slowly drive along the west-bound lane across Shell gas station in San Vicente. The road was temporarily blocked after several branches and rocks prevented motorists from crossing.

A car goes straight into the drainage across Garapan Elementary School.

LIBERTY DONES



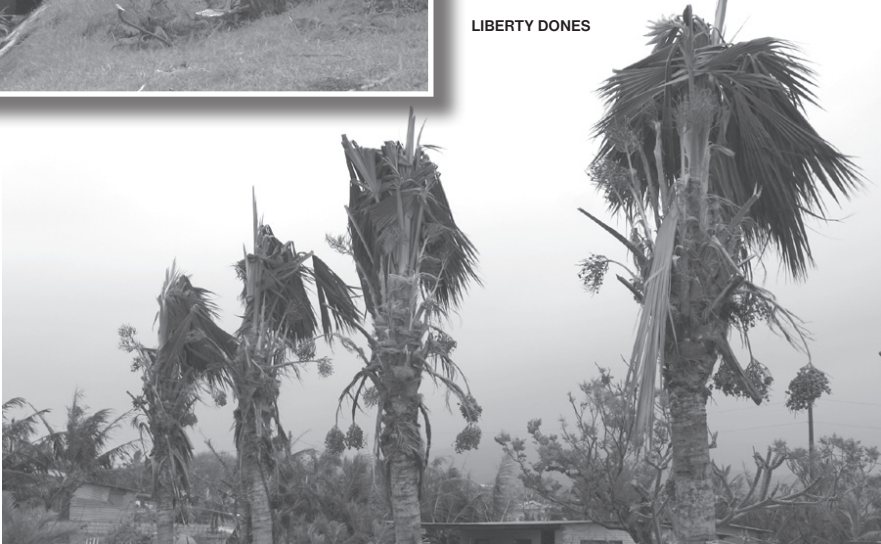
One of the aged flame trees on Beach Road gets uprooted by Supertyphoon Chaba.

LIBERTY DONES



The intersection at the Sadog Tasi resembles a lake, as the drainage system in the area struggles to keep up with the floodwaters brought by Typhoon Chaba yesterday morning.

JAYVEE VALLEJERA



JAYVEE VALLEJERA

This row of bald coconut trees in Kagman speak of the ferocity of Chaba, which roared through the CNMI with supertyphoon strength.



CASSIE DLG FEJERAN
Tom Duenas, Joey Mostales, Olinga Warren, Edgar Niric, and the children Mikaela, Margarette, and Jose Duenas join hands in helping remove the tree that blocked the Afetnas Road in San Antonio.

Saipan residents get off from the public school bus to take temporary shelter at the Marianas High School campus yesterday.

CASSIE DLG FEJERAN



SHAN SEMAN
A staff of the Department of Public Works clears the westbound lane by Shell Gas Station in San Vicente after of rocks, dirt, and branches filled up the road, preventing motorists from driving through early yesterday morning.



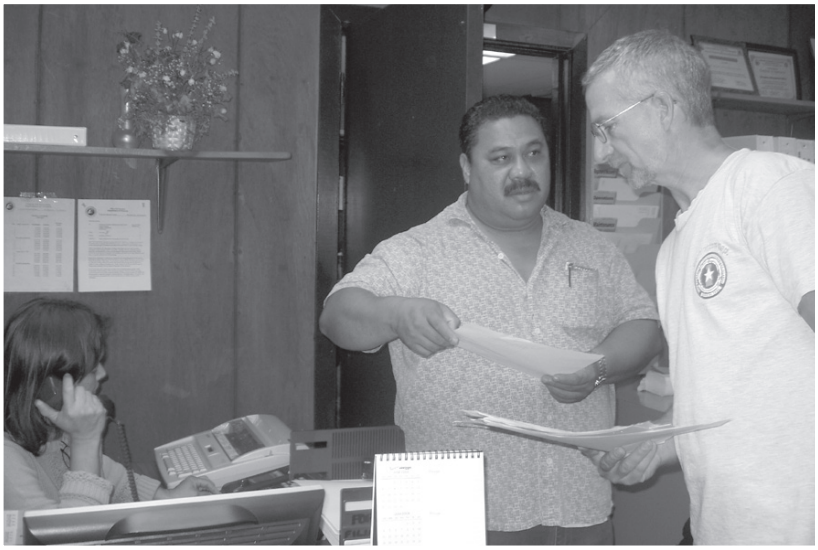
CASSIE DLG FEJERAN
Clockwise from the top, Laylanne John, Bryan John, and Enola Saures pose for the camera at the Koblerville Elementary School shortly after running around the campus. These kids try to be creative in how to occupy themselves while staying at the campus, where they and their parents took shelter from Typhoon Chaba.



JAYVEE VALLEJERA
With the winds dying down to a more tolerable level, this woman returns her beloved potted plants to their original places in front of her apartment on Capitol Hill.

The table and benches at the Chalan Kanoa beach were torn apart like so much Lego blocks as a result of the high tide brought by Supertyphoon Chaba.

CASSIE DLG FEJERAN



LIBERTY DONES
Emergency Management Office director Rudy Pua and the governor's senior adviser, Bob Schwalbach, huddle at EMO office Monday noon.



JAYVEE VALLEJERA
These police officers are dwarfed by this giant tree that fell across the road at the Northern Marianas College campus in Finasisu but they valiantly hack at the tree's branches to make the road passable for motorists.

PSS011

Business

Groups differ on impact of overtime rules

By LEIGH STROPE
AP LABOR WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—Paychecks could surge or shrink for a few or for millions of workers across the country starting Monday, when sweeping changes to the nation's overtime pay rules take effect.

There is little agreement by the Bush administration, employer groups, labor experts and others on how many workers will gain or lose the right to overtime pay under the new rules in the Fair Labor Standards Act.

"To be candid, no one knows," said Jerry Hunter, a labor lawyer at Bryan Cave LLP in St. Louis and former general counsel of the National Labor Relations Board during the first Bush administration.

Employers have sought changes for decades, complaining the regulations were ambiguous and out of date, and questioning why highly paid professionals should get overtime pay. Labor unions,

however, say the new rules are intended to reduce employers' costs by cutting the number workers who are eligible for overtime pay.

Estimates of how many workers will lose their overtime eligibility range from 107,000 to 6 million. Workers who could become newly eligible range from very few to 1.3 million.

"Not only is the Labor Department unsure, but a lot of people in a lot of industries are unsure," Hunter said. "This is all very fluid right now."

The major overhaul, the first in more than half a century, is aimed at mostly white-collar workers. The Labor Department says manual laborers and other blue-collar workers will not be affected.

The new rules are intended to limit workers' multimillion-dollar lawsuits, many of them successful, claiming they were cheated out of overtime pay for working more than 40 hours a week.

Retailers, restaurants, insurance firms and banks have been

targets, and jobs in those places are generally exempted from overtime in the new rules. They include chefs, pharmacists, funeral directors, embalmers, journalists, insurance claims adjusters, low- and midlevel bank managers and dental hygienists.

Whether the new rules will reduce litigation is questionable, experts said. Lawyers representing workers have found the suits lucrative.

"This has become a very big area of plaintiffs' employment law, and it is not simply going to go away because of these new regulations," Bill Schurgin, a labor lawyer in the Chicago office of Seyfarth Shaw.

Critics say the changes will eliminate overtime for millions of middle-class Americans struggling in a weak jobs market.

"These are drastic changes that will hurt working families," said Karen Nussbaum, executive director of Working America, an AFL-CIO organization created for workers unable to

join unions. The AFL-CIO is holding a protest outside the Labor Department on Monday.

Labor Secretary Elaine Chao has created a task force that will be "looking very closely and critically at any reclassifications that result in workers losing their overtime status," said Steven Law, deputy secretary.

No new funds have been added, but the department's Wage and Hour Division "will be very, very carefully monitoring and following up with enforcement," especially in high-violation industries, he said. The department won \$212 million in back wages for overtime violations in 2003, a 21 percent increase.

At Denver Water, a public utility, none of the 1,050 employees will be reclassified, said benefits manager Jim Crockett.

"We were in compliance before, and when I analyzed the jobs for the new rules, it came up that no changes were necessary," he said.

When in doubt, the utility classifies workers as overtime-eligible, Crockett said. For example, its survey chiefs are in the field only during only summer months supervising crews; the rest of the year they oversee few workers, if any. But the chiefs are given overtime status, he said.

About 107,000 white-collar workers now eligible for overtime pay who earn \$100,000 or more annually could lose it under the new rules, the Labor Department said.

About 1.3 million workers, mostly low- and midlevel managers at stores and restaurants, who earn less than \$23,660 a year will be newly eligible. However, employers can avoid paying them overtime by raising their salaries, so critics say far fewer will benefit from overtime.

For white-collar workers who fall between those salary levels, their overtime status depends on their job duties and experience. The rules revamp the definitions of professional, administrative

and executive employees, called "duties tests," that are used to determine eligibility.

For example, professional employees exempt from overtime had professional degrees. The new rule allows employers to substitute work experience and instruction.

Executive employees had authority to hire and fire. The new rule expands that provision, saying an executive can make recommendations that carry weight regarding employment status.

Labor leaders say slight changes in wording could exempt millions from overtime pay. The Labor Department says duties are more clear and make status more certain, resulting in "few, if any" losing overtime.

The changes will prompt "a whole new round of litigation to determine what these phrases mean," said Baldwin Robertson, a Washington labor lawyer hired by Working America to answer workers' questions on its Web site.

Analysts debate effect of high oil prices

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER
AP ECONOMICS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—High oil prices, which have been a factor in virtually all U.S. recessions over the past three decades, are surging again this year. And the higher crude oil prices climb, the more risk energy costs pose to what, until recently, many expected to be a banner year for the U.S. economy.

Some economists are even beginning to worry about an outright recession if oil prices, already at record levels, go much higher. And concerns are rising about the threat of "stagflation," a dreaded economic malady of stagnant growth coupled with rising prices that had the United States in its grip during the oil shocks of the 1970s.

It isn't just higher energy prices that are inflicting the damage, but the ripple effect these higher costs have on such critical areas as consumer spending.

"Oil has become a barometer of confidence in the global economy," said Sung Won Sohn, chief economist at Wells Fargo in Minneapolis. "Higher oil prices mean uncertainty is rising and economic growth is going to be weaker."

Stock prices, which have been buffeted by the surge in oil prices over the past few weeks, recovered a bit Friday with the Dow Jones industrial average rising 69.32 points to 10,110.14. Investors were heartened that oil prices, which had been setting a string of record highs, retreated Friday to close at \$47.60, down \$1.10 from an all-time high of



Natural gas burns near the area insurgents bombed at an oil pipeline in southern Iraq that hadn't been in use for several days, setting it ablaze, at Berjisiya, 35 kilometres southwest of the southern city of Basra, Iraq Saturday Aug. 21, 2004.

\$48.70 set Thursday.

Many analysts believe the U.S. economy could still be jolted by oil prices above \$50 per barrel with all the lingering concerns about possible supply disruptions in Iraq and elsewhere.

"If you look at what is going on in the economy, there is a lot to make you nervous," said David Wyss, chief economist at Standard & Poor's in New York.

Those concerns have caused analysts to trim their forecasts for economic growth in recent weeks. A quarterly survey of 30 top economists done by the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia found them forecasting growth of 4.3 percent this year, down from their estimate three

months ago of 4.6 percent growth, which would have been the strongest pace in 20 years.

The 4.3 percent forecast for the gross domestic product would still be faster than the 3 percent gain of 2003, but it would be slower than the 4.5 percent growth rates hit in both 1999 and 1997 during the United States' record-breaking, decade-long economic expansion.

Some pessimists are slashing their forecasts even more. Stephen Roach, chief economist at Morgan Stanley, notified clients last week that if oil prices remain around present levels they "could lead to a recession in 2005."

The rise in energy costs since early this year has already exacted

a toll. The gross domestic product, which was racing ahead at a 4.5 percent rate in the first three months of this year, slowed to a 3 percent pace in the April-June quarter as consumers cut back sharply on spending.

John Felmy, chief economist at the American Petroleum Institute, an industry group in Washington, calculates that two-thirds of that slowdown can be attributed to higher energy prices.

That slower growth and rising anxiety over energy prices caused businesses to cut back sharply on hiring over the past two months, with just 32,000 jobs created in July, far below the 200,000-plus jobs analysts had been expecting.

Olympians pursue marketing gold, too

NEW YORK (AP)—For millions of Americans, gymnast Paul Hamm's fame began only when the broad-shouldered Olympian shrugged off a fall in the vaulting competition last week and made an inspired comeback to win gold. So was credit card giant Visa U.S.A. just lucky that it's been featuring his face for months inside its customers' billing statements?

Hardly. A new generation of Olympic athletes is just starting to enjoy its moment in the spotlight. But for the competitors—and agents and marketers—trying to capitalize on the short-lived glory achieved in Athens, it is increasingly about signing contracts months or even years before the games began.

Visa signed swimmer Michael Phelps—who won eight medals in this Olympics—to a marketing and sponsorship contract 2 1/2 years ago, when he was just 16 and virtually unknown. Well before any medals were awarded, U.S. softball pitcher Jennie Finch had signed deals with Bank of America and Bolle sunglasses and gymnast Carly Patterson had agreed to endorsements for AT&T Wireless and McDonald's.

"The general window for the Olympics is fairly short to begin with, but it is pretty clear that your ability to leverage these athletes and build excitement up toward the games has become an important part of the marketing strategy," said Paul Swangard, managing director of the Warsaw Sports Marketing Center at

the University of Oregon.

"I think most of the athletes that are competing today grew up in an environment where they witnessed the success of ... the post-1984 generation of Olympic stars and want a piece of that, and understand that it's going to take some good marketing," he said.

In the days since the Athens Games began, a growing roster of athletes have captured attention that could propel them into lucrative roles in television ads, public appearances and on the speakers' circuit.

But while a few are real surprise stories, many are the very athletes that marketers identified before the games as most likely to succeed in the competition for dollars. When The Sports Business Daily, a trade publication, polled sports and advertising executives in June, Phelps was picked as the most marketable Olympian, with Finch, swimmer Natalie Coughlin, wrestler Rulon Gardner and Patterson next on the list.

All but Coughlin had already signed endorsement deals by that point, a sign of how things have changed in the way that Olympic marketing stars are made.

"Back in the days of Bruce Jenner and Carl Lewis you kind of had to perform and you had to win the gold and then you racked up the endorsements afterward," said Bob Dorfman of Pickett Advertising in San Francisco, who authors a newsletter analyzing athletes' marketing potential.

Opinion

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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AP The Associated Press

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EDITORIAL

NMI

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typhoon. Initial estimates placed the damage at over \$18 million. *(See related story.)*

Chaba unleashed its fury beginning 6pm Sunday night, with howling winds escalating from 110mph to 145mph at dawn yesterday. Heavy rain accompanied the winds from Sunday night to early Monday morning, resulting in floods on several portions of the islands.

Around 1am yesterday morning, the rains caused the stormwater drainage on Middle Road by the Sugar King Park to overflow, producing a strong current that endangered motorists. Chaba also caused the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.’s sewer lines to overflow in Tanapag and in San Antonio, with the sewage ending up in nearby beaches.

The ferocious winds knocked down trees and branches, rendering some thoroughfares temporarily impassable. This stranded several motorists throughout the night, forcing them to take temporary shelter at commercial establishments until police and government personnel began clearing road-blocks early yesterday.

Chaba’s eye went as close as 25 miles northeast of Rota, wielding 120mph winds, gusting to 150 mph about 10pm Sunday. By 2am yesterday, the National Weather Service located the typhoon’s eye at about 40 miles north of Rota, packing winds of almost supertyphoon-strength at 145mph, gusting to 175 mph.

With Chaba extending to about 50 miles in diameter, Emergency Management Office director Rudolfo Pua said Rota suffered severely from the typhoon’s battering. Pua said Rota possibly was the worst hit by the typhoon, which stayed close to the island for several hours. “The [typhoon] looped between Rota and Tinian, and then went up northwest.”

Rota Mayor Benjamin Manglona declared the island as a local disaster area late Sunday night, asking the governor to identify local funds to assist the island in relief efforts. He also asked Babauta to immediately contact FEMA and other federal agencies to seek emergency relief programs.

“In the absence of the official report, I believe the damage caused by Typhoon Chaba is extensive as the eye of [the] typhoon] may have directly struck over the island of Rota,” Manglona said.

On Saipan, 145mph winds came as close as 50 miles southwest of the island at about 2am yesterday, enough to overturn a 40-footer container van, rip away roofs and destroy houses, and knock down huge trees and power poles.

Forty-year-old Sally Bartolome of Middle Road, Gualo Rai, was hit on the shoulder by her apartment’s door, which flew off its hinges due to strong winds. She and her relatives evacuated to Winchell’s in Garapan until daylight, only to find out that the house has been destroyed.

“This is the first time I’ve experienced this in my 13 years on Saipan,” Bartolome said. The house’s roof got blown several meters away near the northbound lane of the Middle Road.

Chaba knocked down at least two power poles fronting the Chamolinian Cultural Village in Garapan, and a light post on Airport Road near the Saipan International Airport.

The steel-concrete ceiling of the biggest Mobil gas retail station on Saipan on Middle Road, Garapan collapsed,

prompting its management to close down the outlet yesterday when motorists were lining up to refuel.

Almost all of the gas stations on the island temporarily discontinued service Sunday afternoon in anticipation of Chaba’s destructive winds, except for the Shell gas station on Airport Road, which heeded patrons’ demand to remain open. As gas retail stations resumed service yesterday morning, a long line of motorists could be seen waiting for their turn to gas up.

By 7am, Chaba intensified to supertyphoon, as maximum sustained winds reached 180mph gusting to 220mph. By this time, the EMO said the supertyphoon was about 115 miles west of Saipan, 110 miles west of Tinian, and 110 miles northwest of Rota. The EMO said Chaba, which then moved westerly at a faster pace of 17mph, was about 215 miles southwest of Alamagan, 235 miles south southwest of Pagan, and 275 miles south-southwest of Agrihan.

Chaba maintained wind strength until yesterday afternoon, when the governor cancelled his typhoon condition declaration for the islands as of 4:15pm. The EMO said the supertyphoon was about 190 miles west of Saipan, 185 miles west-northwest of Tinian, and 185 northwest of Rota, while moving west-northwest at 9 mph.

867 evacuees flee homes

At least 867 residents temporarily vacated their homes to government-designated shelters.

The number doubled from Sunday’s over 373 total, as Chaba’s eye approached the islands early Sunday night. Evacuees filled at least two shelters—the Oleai Elementary School and the ChaCha OceanView Jr. High School—with evacuees numbering beyond these two shelters’ capacities.

Evacuees at Oleai reached 145, greater than its 140-head capacity, while ChaCha had 96 evacuees, 26 more than what it could normally accommodate.

The number of evacuees at the Marianas High School, which can accommodate up to 400 persons, totaled 144. Koberville Elementary School had 83 evacuees; Garapan Elementary School, 75; San Vicente Elementary School, 65; Kagman High School, 55; Tanapag Elementary School, 39; Dandan Elementary School, 31; and William S. Reyes Elementary School, 10.

Rota’s Man Amko’ Center temporarily housed some 72 residents, while the island’s health center accommodated some six evacuees. Some 46 persons trooped to the Tinian Elementary School for temporary shelter.

The use of the classrooms as temporary shelters means they won’t be available for classes this week. However, the Public School System reportedly advised the EMO that it could only allow the use of the facilities until Friday.

The PSS intends to resume classes once power and water supplies are restored, according to Board of Education chair Roman Benavente. He noted that schools becoming temporary shelters are merely the secondary function of the facilities in cases of typhoon.

“I’m hoping that classes will resume Monday next week because classrooms need to be cleaned first,” Benavente said. “We have the responsibility to our students. We need to open the schools for them. However, we can’t open it if we don’t have power and water.”

Babauta and Lt. Gov. Diego T. Benavente assured the public, though, that the government would look for other

temporary shelters to house evacuees once classes resume, saying that their safety is of paramount concern.

Among the possible alternative shelters being looked at is the Kagman Community Center, Lt. Gov. Benavente said.

“We can’t just let these people [evacuees] leave [the shelters] without homes to go back to,” Babauta said. “If we can’t place residents in alternative shelters, we have no choice but to ask PSS to keep them in schools for more days.”

Govt begins restoration work

Government agencies pooled efforts to immediately begin restoration work as soon as Chaba’s wind strength subsided yesterday.

Some policemen could be seen using chainsaws to cut up huge trees that blocked roads and caused traffic snarls, including debris on the road leading to Chalan Kiya.

The Department of Public Works also began mobilizing equipment and manpower to clear thoroughfares from debris.

EMO’s Pua advised motorists to stay indoors as much as possible. “[Going out] is very risky because of the debris on the roads. It also hampers debris clearing.”

CUC’s crewmen attended to damaged power poles and transformers on different portions of the islands.

Chaba’s wind strength downed power lines and prompted the CUC to shut down power generation until the weather clears up. Full restoration work, however, might take one or two weeks, the governor said. Without power, the CUC’s power lines rendered the firm’s water pumps temporarily non-functional, Lt. Gov. Benavente added.

Pua said he asked government agencies to submit their respective damage assessment report, as well as to contribute whatever resources they could extend to help in the restoration efforts.

This development followed the governor’s declaration of a state of emergency, which empowered him to identify and mobilize resources to respond to the damage caused by Chaba.

The EMO advised all government employees to report for work today, including PSS employees, despite cancelled classes.

The Commonwealth Health Center would also resume normal operations tomorrow, the EMO said. “All peripheral clinics including the STD/HIV Center, Southern Clinic, Northern Clinic, [and] BEH [Bureau of Environmental Health] office [would] be open [today], provided that electricity in the areas has been turned on. Due to fallen power poles, the CDAC [Children’s Disability Assistance Center] [would] be closed [today].”

The Department of Public Health also advised residents to boil rainwater before drinking it.

Yesterday, a team from the U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration volunteered to conduct site surveys on matters involving safety and hazardous materials.

OSHA’s James Wulff, safety and health manager at the agency’s Saipan office, said OSHA regional administrator Frank Strasheim personally witnessed the wrath of the supertyphoon. Wulff said Strasheim is on-island after last week’s Safety and Health Conference, where the administrator was keynote speaker.

BUSH

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transporting evacuees, operating temporary shelters, and providing public safety and medical services,” the governor reported to the President.

Babauta said the CNMI government has limited resources to address immediate needs for generators, food, water, shelters, communications equipment, debris removal equipment, and sanitation services.

Babauta forwarded his request for an “expedited major disaster” declaration to the White House even before the supertyphoon left the Northern Marianas yesterday afternoon.

The governor also asked the Federal Emergency Management Agency for a Joint Federal/State Rapid Needs Assessment for Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

“The purpose of the RNA is to collect and provide information to determine requirements for critical resources needed to support emergency response activities,” Babauta said. “The Northern Islands of Alamagan, Agrihan and Pagan cannot be assessed at this time due to lack of communication.”

Babauta designated Emergency Management Office director Rudolfo Pua and Governor’s Authorized Representative Virginia Villagomez to work with FEMA on the damage assessment.

In his request for disaster declaration, the governor asked the President to authorize federal individual assistance for affected CNMI residents. Once made

ONE-TWO

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San Vicente, Papago, Koblerville, As Perdido, Chalan Piao, Afetnas, Chalan Kanoa, Susupe, and San Jose.

Mathis said these areas, except for some isolated parts, were expected to have their power supply back by Monday evening.

She also reported that half of the areas getting power from Feeders 1, 4, and 7 were still experiencing power outage as of 4pm yesterday. Villages affected are Upper Navy Hill, Capitol Hill,, Kagman, San Roque, As Matuis and Marpi.

According to Mathis, the most work that still needs to be done involves Feeder 2, which supplies power to Beach Road, Garapan, Puerto Rico, Chalan Laulau, Quartermaster, and San Jose. At least two power poles have fallen within the area.

Mathis said CUC yesterday directed its two teams of personnel to both work during daytime yesterday. “Light is precious. There are a lot of repair work that just can’t be done at night,” she said.

Various water wells and booster pumps have also been offline since Sunday evening, according to a report by CUC water manager Jesus Castro. The wells and pumps will be

AIRLINES

From Page 1

Each flight has a seat capacity of 377 passengers.

A Northwest Airlines flight arrived at 4pm, while two others were anticipated to land after midnight. Other flights were expected to depart and arrive as scheduled, Salas added.

In a press advisory sent Monday morning, Continental Airlines also expressed plans to operate service to Saipan at 1:20pm and to Rota at 1:30pm yesterday. “This schedule is dependent on airport facilities being operational for flight service,” Continental said.

Salas also reported that the Tinian International Airport opened yesterday, allowing commuter service providers

available, FEMA’s individual housing assistance provides financial help for displaced residents to rent a place to live or a temporary housing unit when other housing resources are not available. Homeowners may also be eligible for assistance to repair damage not covered by insurance.

Other needs assistance may help address residents’ disaster-related necessary expenses and serious needs, including medical and dental expenses, and replacement of clothing, household items, and appliances, among others.

“It has been reported that homes have been destroyed due to the severe winds, numerous roofs have been blown off homes, shelters have maximized occupancies which forced the opening of uncertified shelters, homeless evacuees requested transportation to shelters and could not be accommodated because of unsafe road conditions due to high winds and flooding,” Babauta said.

The governor also reported to the President that the supertyphoon downed power lines, which prompted the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. to shut down power generation until weather conditions improve. He said power restoration might take one to two weeks.

He added that roads were damaged, while fallen trees and other debris necessitate clearing operations.

“The CNMI’s beautification project to enhance major roadways, parks and recreational facilities to promote tourism are completely destroyed,” the governor said.

operational once power is restored in their respective areas.

The off-line water wells were located in Gualo Rai, Kagman, As Matuis, Isley Field, San Vicente, Dandan, Koblerville, As Lito, and Chalan Kiya.

“Due to power outages during the typhoon, consistent distribution of adequately treated public water supply will not be possible. Therefore, the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. is advising the general public to please boil the water prior to consumption,” CUC said. “If boiling is impractical due to lack of electrical power, water can be purified by adding a small amount of household bleach, such as Clorox or Purex.”

CUC instructed customers to follow this dosage:

Container size	Amount of bleach
1 gallon	5 drops
5 gallons	20 drops
55 gallons	1 teaspoon
100 gallons	2 teaspoons
500 gallons	2 tablespoons
1,000 gallons	4 tablespoons

“Allow the water to stand in a covered container for at least 30 minutes before using. Lastly, if the abovementioned is not desired or not possible, bottled water are available at your convenient stores,” CUC said.

such as Pacific Island Aviation and Freedom to proceed with their inter-island flights.

The airport experienced no major damage from the typhoon, according to Salas. “What we have are just regular problems associated with typhoons. There are some areas that need to be cleaned up and dried out. But apart from that, the terminal facility and the runways are all normal. It’s really the perimeters that require work because of debris,” he said.

He added that the airport has enough power supply from its own generators, as well as backup generators from CUC.

Operations at the Port of Saipan also resumed yesterday, Salas said. Damage assessment, however, are still ongoing at the Tinian and Rota docks.

Business



Asia



World

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Life & Style

Witness: Blake worried about child

By RYAN PEARSON
AP WRITER

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Robert Blake was afraid his wife-to-be would expose their child to a life of drugs and crime—so he plotted a year before her murder to gain custody, a private investigator testified.

William Jordan said Friday he was trying to get Bonny Lee Bakley to leave her infant daughter in California in a plan hatched with Blake four years ago.

"He didn't think Bonny was a good mother for Rosie," Jordan said Friday. "He wanted the baby. ... It was constantly on his mind, I think."

Blake, 70, is charged with killing 44-year-old Bakley on May, 4, 2001. The couple married just months before Bakley was killed. He has pleaded not guilty.

Bakley was found shot to death in their car outside a restaurant where they had dined. Blake told police he found his wife mortally wounded after he went back to the restaurant to retrieve a handgun he carried for protection.

Jordan testified that a similar scene had played out before—he dined at the same restaurant with Blake as many as seven times and the former "Baretta" TV star went back during one of those visits to retrieve a gun he said he'd forgotten.

Jordan took the witness stand for two hours during a



Actor Robert Blake leaves the Los Angeles Superior Court after a hearing Friday, Aug. 20, 2004, in the Van Nuys section of Los Angeles.

"conditional examination" to be played for a jury if he is unable to testify at trial. Prosecutors, however, said the 78-year-old retired Los Angeles policeman likely would be available for the trial scheduled to begin Nov. 1.

Jordan said he was hired by Blake in the summer of 2000 and worked three or four months for him in anticipation of custody proceedings over Blake's daughter, who was born in June of that year.

The investigator said he developed a plan in which Bakley, who lived in Little Rock, Ark., met with Blake in California.

At the meeting, Jordan warned that she could be arrested for traveling so far from home under conditions of her parole for a conviction involving false identification.

Blake persuaded Bakley to leave Rosie with him, Jordan said.

But, he testified, Bakley's arrest had been unlikely.

"I considered the whole thing a gimmick to get her to give him the baby," Jordan said.

Blake told the investigator he was concerned that if Bakley was permitted to raise the girl, Rosie "would be exposed to the wrong elements, including drugs, prostitution and things of that nature," Jordan said.

Blake is free on \$1.5 million bail but remains under house arrest. He is due back in court for an evidentiary hearing Sept. 17.

Guitar auction to benefit Charley victims

SAN ANTONIO (AP)—Radio giant Clear Channel Communications will raise money for Hurricane Charley victims by auctioning guitars autographed by musical stars, among them Britney Spears, Tom Petty and Kenny Rogers.

The online auction of 43 guitars signed by celebrities started Thursday afternoon and will end Sept. 20, the San Antonio-based company said.

John Hogan, who heads Clear Channel's radio division, said the company's radio outlets in Florida and elsewhere

also have been active in raising relief funds for victims of the hurricane, which killed at least 23 people and caused some \$7.4 billion in damage to homes, businesses and other property.

"This auction is another way for individuals to support those in need," Hogan said. "At the same time, the guitars are great pieces of memorabilia for any music fan."

The company says all proceeds will be split among displaced families and the American Red Cross.

The autographed guitars being offered on Clear Channel's StormAid.com Web site are divided into five music genres - rock, classic rock, pop and urban, alternative and country.

The Stone Temple Pilots, Linkin Park, Nickelback, ZZ Top, Tim McGraw and Shakira are among the other musical acts participating.

There's also a non-musical category that includes instruments signed by conservative radio host Rush Limbaugh and comic actor Mike Myers.

Romano playing meat salesman in next film

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Actor Ray Romano learned about meat then took the heat. The "Everybody Loves Raymond" star plays a meat salesman in the San Fernando Valley in his next film, "Grilled."

"There's a great guy named Sonny who is the best salesman in California," Romano said. "We had a meat-ology

class with him, and I kind of took things from him for my character."

In the movie, due out next summer, Romano and co-star Kevin James of CBS's "The King of Queens" are desperately trying to meet a sales quota on the hottest day of the year.

The shooting schedule runs just 30 days in one of the

region's steamiest locations.

"In Encino, where I live, it's supposed to be 15 degrees hotter than over the hill," Romano said, referring to West Los Angeles. "I thought it couldn't get any hotter than where I live. Here in Chatsworth, you can bump it up 10 more degrees. But it's good for what we're doing."

University in NC honors Andie MacDowell

ROCK HILL, S.C. (AP)—Andie MacDowell is among this year's recipients of Winthrop University's Medal of Honor in the Arts.

The award "annually recognizes the unique contributions to the cultural life of the university, the community and to the nation of a select group

of artists and supporters of the arts," said Andrew Svedlow, dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts.

MacDowell, who lives in nearby Asheville, N.C., will join five other Medal of Honor recipients at an Oct. 22 fundraiser. Proceeds will go to arts scholarships for students from

North and South Carolina.

The 46-year-old actress, a native of Gaffney, attended the school in the 1970s.

Winthrop University cited MacDowell's list of movies. Her films include the upcoming "Beauty Shop" with Queen Latifah, "Four Weddings and a Funeral" and "Groundhog Day."

Suggestions fill in resumé gap for HIV-positive woman

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: Thank you for printing the letter from "Wants to Work in Milwaukee," who is HIV-positive, living on disability, and who asked how to explain the 10-year gap in her work history. Your response about her privacy was correct. However, as a person living with HIV, and an employment services director at Positive Resource Center (in San Francisco) for people with HIV, I can tell you that many interviewers would regard the "personal reasons" explanation as a red flag.



Dear Abby

"Wants to Work" should contact both her local AIDS service organization and her local vocational rehabilitation service. She may need to update her job skills, and she may also need more information, preparation and support. She faces some big hurdles, but with guidance and support she can clear them.

The newly formed National Working Positive Coalition is bringing together the best information about effective services, education and research on HIV and employment. Your readers can find more general information at www.workingpositive.net. Individuals seeking specific advice may want to visit the Workplace forum of TheBody.com.

MARK MISROCK, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL WORKING POSITIVE COALITION

DEAR MARK: Bless you for reaching out and offering such helpful resources to other HIV-positive readers who are ready to re-enter the workforce. Yours is one of several I received. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: Please advise "Wants to Work" (and others with a gap in work history, regardless of the reason) that an excellent way to re-enter the job market is to first begin working at a temporary agency. There are many opportunities in temping—secretarial work, project management, accounting, technical writing and engineering, to name a few.

After staying home with my children for seven years, I found temping a great way to transition back into the job market. I also made wonderful business contacts who gave me excellent (and recent) references when I applied for my current job as an executive director of a nonprofit organization.

WORKING WOMAN, NOBLESVILLE, IND.

DEAR WORKING WOMAN: Thank you for another practical suggestion.

DEAR ABBY: There are several ways that "Wants to Work" can include information in a resume without revealing that she has been out of the workforce for 10 years. She can find resume-writing books at most bookstores, and she should look for "functional" resumes. These documents focus on job skills, rather than the dates and types of positions held. This strategy allows writers to showcase their abilities, rather than their age or specific places of employment.

ENGLISH TEACHER IN THE EAST

DEAR ENGLISH TEACHER: There are also businesses that help people create strong resumes.

DEAR ABBY: The dilemma faced by "Wants to Work" is not unusual in this day and age. She should contact her local AIDS services organization. There are advocates available to help people make the transition from being disabled to returning to work, and to go over the benefits, medical coverage, and how to make the transition without unnecessarily jeopardizing their coverage or health.

TERRI IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR TERRI: That's valuable information. The Social Security Administration also has booklets on returning to work after being disabled.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS, and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." To order, send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

Brooke Shields joining 'Wonderful Town' cast

NEW YORK (AP)—Brooke Shields will soon be joining the cast of the Broadway revival of "Wonderful Town."

Shields will replace Donna Murphy on Sept. 28 as writer Ruth Sherwood, a young woman from Ohio determined to make it big in New York in the 1930s.

The musical, which has a score by Leonard Bernstein, Betty Comden and Adolph Green, was first done on Broadway in 1953 with Rosalind Russell in the leading role. The revival opened last November and won a 2004 Tony Award for best choreography for its director-choreographer Kathleen Marshall.

Shields has worked on Broadway before, taking over for Rosie O'Donnell as Rizzo in the long-running revival of "Grease" and she later played Sally Bowles in the Roundabout Theatre Company production of "Cabaret."

The actress has appeared in such movies as "Pretty Baby," "The Blue Lagoon" and "King of the Gypsies" and starred in the NBC sitcom "Suddenly Susan" for four seasons.



Pastimes

Shannon Essenpreis wins Jr. Miss crown

MOBILE, Ala. (AP)—Texan Shannon Essenpreis was crowned America's Junior Miss after belting out a Broadway showtune and soaring through interviews with her "bubbly" personality.

Though Essenpreis was crowned Saturday night, television viewers won't see it until July as producers switch to a "reality TV" format. PAX Network camera crews followed the 50 contestants for two weeks leading up to Saturday's contest.

Essenpreis was among five finalists who were given on-the-spot questions tailored to their individual interests. She was asked how she would use the enthusiasm she's displayed as her school's mascot into her planned career as a broadcast journalist.

"I was so nervous," she said after the show. "And the question was so long that by the end of it, I wasn't sure what they were asking me."

Her answer? She'll report on the positive aspects of life while maintaining her personal optimism.

After the contest, Heisman Trophy winner and Junior Miss judge Herschel Walker said he was particularly impressed with Essenpreis' charm and "bubbly" character in her interview last week. Essenpreis won a \$50,000 scholarship.

Singh wins Buick Open, outlasting Daly

By LARRY LAGE
AP SPORTS WRITER

BUICK GRAND BLANC,

Mich. (AP)—Vijay Singh outlasted John Daly with a 5-under 67 Sunday to win the Buick Open with a 23-under 265 for his fourth victory of the year and 19th of his career. Daly, vying for a second win in one year for the first time, finished a stroke back after shooting a 66 and bogeying the 18th hole.

Tiger Woods started the day three strokes behind Singh, and pulled within a stroke while

shooting a 66. He finished at 21 under, two strokes behind the winner and tied with Carlos Franco (67) for third.

Woods will look to snap his streak without a major at nine in two weeks at the PGA Championship.

Defending champion Jim Furyk, who shared the second-round lead with Singh, finished tied for sixth at 17 under after shooting a 68 on Sunday.

The final round turned into a virtual match-play between Singh and Daly, one of the top golfers in the world against one of the most popular.

Singh's bogey at 18 created an opportunity for Daly to force a playoff, but Daly was unable to take advantage of the break.

Singh is just the third two-time Buick Open champion, and the first since Julius Boros won at Warwick Hills a second time in 1967.

Entering the tournament, Singh had 10 top-10 finishes. But since winning consecutive tournaments three months ago, he has just two top-five finishes and was tied for 28th at the U.S. Open and 20th at the British Open.

The Fijian played well this week after changing his putter,



Vijay Singh of Fiji watches his tee shot on the eighth hole at the Buick Open at Warwick Hills Golf & Country Club in Grand Blanc, Mich., Sunday, Aug. 1, 2004.

going back to a standard putter after using a long one for 2 1/2 years. He also said earlier in the week that he stopped worrying about chasing Woods in the world rankings.

Woods is No. 1 in the world rankings, and Singh is third.

Singh won his seventh straight tournament when he at least shared the lead after 54 holes, dating to the 2002 Shell Houston open.

With Singh, Daly and Woods atop the leaderboard entering the final round, it was a Buick

Open unlike any other.

A sea of fans waiting at the first tee roared when Daly was introduced and just politely clapped for Singh, who seemed to get a kick out of the rock-star like reception for Daly.

As they walked down the first

fairway, Singh patted Daly on the back and both chuckled and shook their heads, fans hooted and hollered best wishes toward Daly in a preview of what was to come over the next four hours.

Singh was wild off the tee at times, but made a handful of shots over and around trees. His first drive landed in the 10th fairway, but unfazed by his blind shot over trees, Singh scrambled well enough to start with a birdie.

And Daly did, too.

Daly made an eagle from 142 yards at the par-4 No. 2, causing the crowd to erupt with applause as he pulled into a tie at 19 under.

He took the lead with a birdie on the third hole and kept a one-shot lead until Singh's birdie at No. 12 knotted them up at 22 under.

Singh went ahead by a shot with a birdie at 14—to reach 23 under—and was able to maintain a one-shot edge the rest of the way.

He got into trouble on the final hole, but his second shot out of the rough landed on the green close enough to set up two-putt, which was just enough to win because Daly missed a makable par putt.

Lions sign first-round pick Roy Williams



A L L E N PARK, Mich. (AP)—Receiver Roy Williams

agreed to a five-year contract with the Detroit Lions on Sunday.

The seventh overall pick in the draft out of Texas, Williams was the lone Lions player who did not report when the team began training camp Friday. He remained in the area while the deal was being negotiated, however, and arrived at camp Sunday afternoon.

He spent the remainder of the day in orientation meetings and video sessions.

"We were able to get this done in about 48 hours," Detroit chief operating officer Tom Lewand said. "We're happy we were able to get it done and get it done quickly."

Williams will be in uniform Monday when the Lions resume practice.

Terms of the contract were not disclosed but the five-year deal is a year shorter than those given to quarterback Joey Harrington and receiver Charles Rogers, the top picks in the 2002 and '03 drafts, respectively. Harrington was taken third overall, while Rogers was the second overall selection.

Williams caught 70 passes for 1,079 yards and nine touchdowns as a senior at Texas last season. He finished his career with 241 catches, 3,866 yards and 36 touchdowns, all of which were school records.

The team hopes he and Rogers can team to give Harrington a tall and speedy receiving tandem to help spark a club that has compiled the NFL's worst record in the last three seasons.

By ROY KAMMERER
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

COLOGNE, Germany (AP)—Larry Brown wants to move on. The U.S. Olympic basketball coach said Sunday that the suspension of Allen Iverson, LeBron James and Amare Stoudemire is forgotten. He would rather focus on a tough road trip against some of Europe's top teams leading up the Athens Olympics.

Brown refused to let Iverson, James and Stoudemire play in the team's 96-71 win over Puerto Rico on Saturday, punishment for the trio showing up late for a team meeting.

"It won't happen again. They'll play the next game and some will start," Brown said.

The U.S. squad arrived in Germany on Sunday, shook off the jet lag and held its first practice.

And Brown is having some second thoughts about whether this series of exhibitions, which includes a game against world champion Serbia and Montenegro, is ideal for his team.

That's a switch from last year, when he was eager for the trip after the U.S. team romped through Olympic qualifying in Puerto Rico with a 10-0 record. Since then, however, veterans from that team, including Mike Bibby, Tracy McGrady and Ray Allen, have bailed out.

Now, Brown is drilling the youngest U.S. Olympic team, with an average age of 23.6 years, since NBA players were first allowed into the 1992 Games.



James, Dwyane Wade and Carmelo Anthony may be talented, but they are newcomers to basketball abroad. The team played together just one week, and many players will need a crash course in the different rules of the international game.

Brown thought the team had put all that behind them in Puerto Rico.

"We thought that team would be playing. We thought we had laid the foundation," Brown said. "Now I think maybe we can use the practice."

The U.S. team faces Italy on Tuesday, followed by Germany and Dirk Nowitzki on Wednesday. Then it plays two more away games against Serbia and Montenegro and Turkey, whose NBA players include Utah's Mehmet Okur.

"I hope this trip will competitively toughen us up," Brown said.

Sunday's practice, during which Brown worked on some plays, was a closed session in a sweltering small gym. Only a handful of reporters were let in to watch a late shootaround and talk to the players.

That will be different against Italy and Germany. The NBA stars, often still called "The Dream Team" abroad, have awakened huge interest.

From across the world, the

German organizers of the exhibition game said more than 500 media sought accreditation for the two games, with around 350 gaining approval. That's about a 100 more than followed the U.S. team's training camp in Jacksonville.

While handling the growing hoopla, Brown will have to get his young team used to the international game's wider lanes, the different calls from referees, the shortened 3-point line, along with schooling them in some simple plays.

All that will be needed to offset the American's disadvantage, which proved so costly at the world championships in Indianapolis, where it was beaten three times and finished sixth.

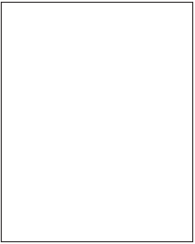
While the U.S. squad has three short weeks to forge a cohesive team, other world powers like Argentina and Serbia and Montenegro have players who have been on the court together for years.

Not that the Americans and their young stars are worried.

Anthony has already boldly predicted a gold medal, while James said he isn't concerned about upholding the American's 24-0 mark since NBA players were allowed in the Olympics.

"There's no pressure at all," James said. "If we get better and do our job, we have a great chance of accomplishing our goals."

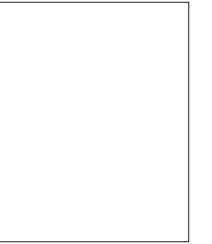
U.S. coach Larry Brown, right, sends in a play with guard Stephon Marbury during an Olympic tuneup against Puerto Rico, Saturday, July 31, 2004, in Jacksonville, Fla. The U.S. team won 96-71.



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